

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-20

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FM AMEMBASSY BRASILIA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9475

INFO AMCONSUL SAO PAULO

AMCONSUL RIO DE JANEIRO

AMCONSUL RECIFE

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PGOV BR

SUBJECT: CASSATION OF MAYOR OF ANAPOLIS

REF: BRASILIA 3244 AUGUST 29, 1972; USDAO BRASILIA 181547Z,
JULY 1972; USDAO BRAZIL 6 809 0348 72, 19 JULY 1972

1. FOR THE FIRST TIME IN SEVERAL YEARS PRESIDENT MEDICI
INVOKED HIS AUTHORITY UNDER IA-5 TO SUSPEND AND CASSATE
FOR POLITICAL REASONS THE POLITICAL RIGHTS OF AN ELECTED
OFFICIAL. THE MDB MAYOR OF ANAPOLIS, GOISA, JOSE BATISTA
JUNIOR WAS THE VICTIM OF THE PRESIDENT'S AUGUST 28
DECREE. ALTHOUGH THE OFFICIAL ANNOUNCEMENT GAVE NO
REASON FOR THE ACTION, IN DEFENDING THE GOVERNMENT
ARENA LEADER GERALDO FREIRE SUGGESTED THAT SUBVERSION
NECESSITATED THE MOVE.

2. ACCORDING TO RELIABLE DEFENSE ATTACHE SOURCES, THE
CASSATION WAS THE CULMINATION OF THE INVESTIGATIONS OF
SUBVERSIVE ACTIVITY WHICH HAVE BEEN GOING ON FOR SOME
TIME IN ANAPOLIS AND WHICH RESULTED IN A NUMBER OF
ARRESTS IN JULY 1972. (SEE BRASILIA 3244 OF AUGUST 29,
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1972.) ACCORDING TO THESE SOURCES, THE PRESIDENT WAS

HESITANT TO CASSATE THE MDB MAYOR BUT THE EVIDENCE PRESENTED PERSUADED HIM OF ITS NECESSITY. AT THE SAME TIME, THE PRESIDENT DECREED ANAPOLIS, WHICH IS THE HOME BASE OF BRAZIL'S NEW MIRAGE SQUADRON, A NATIONAL SECURITY AREA.

3. AS COULD BE EXPECTED THE MDG IMMEDIATELY PROTESTED VIGOROUSLY THE CASSATION AND THE INCORPORATION OF ANOTHER MDB-MAJORITY MUNICIPALITY INTO THE NATIONAL SECURITY AREA. THE OPPOSITON LEADER IN THE CHAMBER OF DEPUTIES, ALDO FAGUNDES, TRAVELLED TO ANAPOLIS TO EXPRESS HIS SOLIDARITY WITH EX-MAYOR. IN ADDITION, THE NATIONAL LEADERSHIP OF THE MDB ISSUED A STRONG STATEMENT LAMENTING THE COMPROMISE OF BRAZIL BEFORE THE WORLD BECAUSE OF REPEATED VIOLATIONS OF THE UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF THE RIGHTS OF MAN. THE STATEMENT ALSO ACCUSED SOME SECTORS OF THE GOVERNMENT OF DELIBERATELY DISTURBING THE PROCESS OF THE PRESIDENTIAL SUCCESS.

4. A GOOD NUMBER OF POLITICANS DO NOT BELIEVE THE GOVERNMENT'S ALLEGATIONS OF SUBVERSION. THE POLITICAL RUMOR MILL HAS VARIOUSLY ATTRIBUTED THE CASSATION TO:

- A. THE DESIRE TO BREAK UP THE KEY MDB STRONGHOLD IN GOIAS, EITHER TO DIMINISH THE MDB STRENGTH IN STATE LEGISLATURE OR TO DESTROY OPPOSITON FOOTHOLD ON THE GOVERNOR'S DOORSTEP. THIS, THE MOST WIDELY BELIEVED RUMOR, HAS DEVELOPED OUT OF THE POLITICAL TROUBLES THAT GOVERNOR LEONARDO CAIADO HAS FACED IN THE LAST MONTH. SEVERAL WEEKS AGO, FOUR ARENA DEPUTIES ALLIED WITH A FORMER GOVERNOR AGAINST CAIADO, VOTED WITH THE MDB DEFEATING THE GOVERNOR FOR THE FIRST TIME ON A VOTE IN THE STATE LEGISLATURE. IN ADDITION, THE RECENTLY CASSATED MAYOR CHALLENGED THE GOVERNOR'S RIGHT TO INVESTIGATE THE AFFAIRS OF ANAPOLIS AND THE MAYOR CARRIED HIS CASE TO BRAZIL'S SUPREME COURT.
- B. THE DESIRE TO REMOVE THE EMBARRASSING SPECTACLE OF THE AIR FORCE AND AN OPPOSITION MAYOR COOPERATING, WHICH THEY APPARENTLY HAVE BEEN DOING.
- C. SUSPICION OF THE MAYOR'S CONNECTION WITH A CORRUPT FORMER MAYOR, BUT A LACK OF REAL EVIDENCE

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AGAINST HIM.

D. THE DETERMINATION OF MEDICI TO SHOW THAT HE IS STILL PRESIDENT AND ABLE TO ACT: I.E., A DEMONSTRATION OF MUSCLE-FLEXING AT A TIME WHEN POLITICAL ATTENTION IS FOCUSED MORE AND MORE ON GEISEL'S POSSIBLE PLANS AND PROGRAMS, UNDERLINING MEDICI'S LAME-DUCK STATUS.

5. COMMENT: THE INCLUSION OF ANAPOLIS IN THE NATIONAL

SECURITY AREA IS NOT SURPRISING; MANY POLITICIANS
CONSIDERED THAT THE MIRAGE BASE MADE IT INEVITABLE.
THE SUSPENSION OF POLITICAL RIGHTS IS MORE DIFFICULT
TO EXPLAIN. REGARDLESS OF THE DISBELIEF IN POLITICAL
CIRCLES, IT SEEMS UNLIKELY THE GOVERNMENT WOULD HAVE
TAKEN SUCH A CONTROVERSIAL MOVE, UNLESS IT FELT JUSTI-
FIED BY THE THREAT OF SUBVERSION. WHAT IS UNCLEAR AT
THIS POINT IS WHAT THE EX-MAYOR DID TO INCUR THE
GOVERNMENT'S STRONG DISPLEASURE AND WHAT DEFINITION
OF SUBVERSION THE GOVERNMENT EMPLOYED IN THIS CASE.
WE WILL CONTINUE TO OBSERVE THIS.
CRIMMINS

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